

# The Cross We Carry

*Jesus said, "If anyone wished to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk. 9:23).*

We have a cross to carry.

- **It is OUR Cross.** We do not carry Jesus' cross. He has already done that. We do not carry the cross of others. We must carry our own cross.
- **Our Cross must be TAKEN UP.** This implies that it is a voluntary cross. We must have the mind to pick it up and carry it. Our cross is not given to us by force. It is not something that is given to us without choice. This means, the cross I carry is not physical pain or a handicap. Many people have these problems who never follow Jesus. One does not by choice "Take up" a physical handicap. The cross I take up is not a nagging mate, a domineering parent or a non-Christian mate.
- **The Cross we take up is not something WRONG.** We do not carry wrongs. We are to repent of them. One man said, "The cross a carry is a quick temper." The preacher said, "No, that is your sin."
- **The Cross we take up is a CONTINUAL PROCESS.** Jesus said to take it up daily. Unlike our Lord's Cross, which was used one time, we carry our crosses every day.
- **The Cross we carry represents the PRICE WE ARE WILLING TO PAY TO FOLLOW JESUS.** There are sacrifices of time and energy that one must deny himself and give to the Master. There are sufferings, persecutions, rejection, opposition, annoyances, and inconveniences that come with being a Christian. Daily, I must not only be willing, but I must put up with these things to follow Jesus. Jesus put up with so much of the same. The ridicule, the constant demands, the requests, the questions, the needs, the work – all of these things are necessary to endure as we follow Jesus. Christ must come first in my life.

*Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God (Rom. 12:1).*

*Roger Shouse*